purchase the commodity at declared minimum support price. However, the farmers are free to sell at higher prices in the open market.

Maintenance of Government buildings

1086. SHRI THOMAS KUTHIRAVATTOM: Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) which is the nodal Ministry responsible for the maintenance and up keep of Government buildings in New Delhi;

(b) whether the maintenance of these buildings is upto the mark;

(c) whether it is a fact that all corridors and verandas are crowded with delapidated and dismantled furniture/ladders and such like things making movement cumbursome; and

(d) whether Government propose to take any immediate steps to keep the offices neat and tidy?

THE MINISTER OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) The Ministry of Urban Development through the CPWD is responsible for the maintenance of Government buildings. The up keep, however, is with the concerned Ministry/department in occupation.

(b) Maintenance of the buildings is executed by the CPWD depending upon the needs and the budget provision.

(c) and (d) It is not a fact that all corriders in Government buildings are crowded with delapidated and dismantled furniture. However, in certain buildings due to shortage of space certain items are stored in corridors. Efforts are made by the concerned Ministries/Deptts. to keep their premises neat and tidy.

Conversion of Muzaffarpur-Narkatiaganj and Pahaleja-Pipradih M. G. into B. G.

1087. SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken any decision to convert (i) Muzaffarpur-Narkatiaganj metre gauge railway line, and (ii) Pahaleja-Pipradih -Yadunathpur- Bhavnathpur metre gauge rail line into broad gauge;

(b) whether Government are aware that for development of industries and supply of coal etc., this conversion is essential;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) by when the work is likely to be started?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) No, Sir.

(b) No such requirement for development of industries and movement of coal has come to notice.

(c) and (d) Do not arise.

Refusal to Dr. Arun Manilal Gandhi to travel by train

1088. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:

SHRI HARVENDRA SINGH HANSPAL:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Mahatma Gandhi's grandson Dr. Arun Manilal Gandhi and his family were not allowed to travel by train from Akola to Bombay on the 14th June, 1990, in spite of their having confirmed seats as per the news-item published in the Indian Express of the 20th June, 1990;

(b) if so, what are the deatils thereof; and

(c) what steps Government propose to take to avoid such incidents in future?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) Dr. Arun Manilal Gandhi (grandson of Mahatma Gandhi) had confirmed reservation for three 2nd Class berths on 14-6-90 by 8030 Up Howrah Bombay Express ex. Akola to Bombay. But Dr. Gandhi and his family could not board the train to occupy their reserved berths as a large number of Members of Republican Party of India had entered the reserved compartments. The situation created was beyond the control of the station staff. However, accommodation was arranged for Dr. Gandhi in 7340 Up Nagpur-Dadar-Sewagram Express, the next available train, by which they travelled. The Railway Administration is refunding full fare to Dr. Gandhi for the journey he could not undertake.

(c) The entry of unauthorised passengers in reserved coaches is partly a law and order problem. To curb this evil the following steps are taken by the railways:

(i) Surprise checks are conducted with the help of Government Railway Police/Railway Protection Force and unauthorised passengers found travelling in reserved coaches are detrained and fined under the provisions of the Railways Act.

(ii) The fine for travelling unauthorisedly in reserved compartments under the Railway Act 1989 effective from 1-7-1990 has been enhanced to extend upto Rs. 500/- from Rs. 20/-.

(iii) Disciplinary action against the staff in proved cases of connivance.

Introduction of small bags for wheat and rice

1089. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to introduce 50 kg. bags for wheat and rice instead of 90 kg. bags to facilitate handling by the labourers;

(b) what is the percentage of transit and storage loss of foodgrains during this year in comparison to earlier year; and

(c) what further steps Government propose to take to avoid pilferage and adulteration during the transit and storage?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI RAM PUJAN PATEL): (a) The Tripartite Committee on ILO Conventions of the Ministry of Labour recommended the use of bags of not more than 50 kgs. by manual labour. The FCI are examining the technical and financial implications of the switch-over to 50 kgs. packing in the handling of foodgrains.

(b) The transit and storage shortages for 1990-91 will be known after close of the financial year. Accounts for 1989-90 have not been finalised so far. The percentage of transit and storage shortages of foodgrains in terms of quantity was 1.25 per cent during 1988-89 as against 1.72 per cent during 1987-88.

(c) The steps taken by the FCI to reduce the storage and transit losses are:

(i) Strict enforcement of quality specifications relating to moisture during procurement of foodgrains;

(ii) Reduction in the quantum of foodgrains filled in each bag;

(iii) Installation of weigh-bridges in depots having capacity of 5000 tonnes or more;